



DEPARTMENT OF STATE INSTRUCTION

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NO.: CA-5126, December 22, 1959

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SUBJECT: Berlin Contingency Planning - Air Access - "Task One"

TO: American Embassy, Bonn

Authority

By HR-m/36

Date 8/19/91

Rptd Info: Berlin, Paris (For USCINCEUR, Thurston and Finn)

The working paper on planning to deal with a possible Soviet withdrawal from the Berlin Air Safety Center (enclosure to the Department's CA-2391 of September 12) has been revised in a series of discussions among the Department and the British and French Embassies here to take into account the comments made by the Embassy (Bonn's G-132 of September 24), by LIVE OAK (Paris' telegram 2139 of November 16), by the Mission (Berlin's G-73 of September 26), and by the British Embassy here (Department's CA-3662 of October 28). The French Embassy here has contributed little to the discussion and has simply referred each change in the draft to Paris for instructions. Although it has received no instructions on the subject to date, the French Embassy here appears generally satisfied with the draft and has not indicated that any aspect of it may cause difficulties.

The text of the working paper in its present form is enclosed. It is also being circulated as a Berlin Contingency Planning paper in the BERCON-TRI series.

Any further comments which the addressees may wish to make are welcome.

It is hoped that the approval of the Three Governments for the reference of this paper, with any necessary final modifications, to the Three Embassies at Bonn, to LIVE OAK, and to other appropriate military headquarters as a framework for more detailed planning can be obtained in the near future.

Enclosure:

DILLON, ACTING

Berlin Contingency Planning.
Air Access - Possible Soviet Withdrawal from
Berlin Air Safety Center

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BERLIN CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Air Access - Possible Soviet Withdrawal from Berlin Air Safety Center

The following recommendations for planning to deal with a possible Soviet withdrawal from the Berlin Air Safety Center (BASC) have been prepared in compliance with paragraph 12 b (1) of tripartite paper "Berlin Contingency Planning" dated April 4, 1959.

"Operational Reaction" to Soviet Withdrawal

1. If the Soviet Controller announces that the Soviets are withdrawing from BASC, the U. S. (British, French) Controllers will immediately make the following statement in reply:

"Flight information will continue to be made available to you at BASC in the normal manner. I am instructed to inform you that U. S. (British, French) aircraft will continue to fly in the Berlin corridors and control zone in the normal manner. My Government will hold your Government responsible for any interference with the safety of these aircraft while they are in the corridors and in the control zone."

The statement will also contain a description of the other means which will be used to communicate flight safety information in the Soviet Controller's absence, including the channels which will be used to pass it to the East German air traffic control authority and the wave lengths on which it will be broadcast.

2. If the Soviet Controller attempts to introduce an East German into BASC, the U. S. (British, French) Controller will immediately inform the Soviet Controller that the presence of an East German official in BASC is not acceptable and request the Soviet Controller to see that the East German leaves BASC at once. If the East German does not leave immediately, the U. S. Controller will summon the U. S. military guards in the building and have them escort the East German from the building. The Western Controllers will tell the Soviet Controller "I am instructed to inform you that my Government holds your Government responsible for avoiding any interference with the safety of U. S. (British, French) aircraft in the Berlin corridors and control zone, and flight information will continue to be made available to you in the normal manner."

3. If the Soviet Controller fails to appear, either without any previous intimation, or after attempting to introduce an East German, the statement in paragraph 1 above will be made immediately to the Soviet headquarters in Berlin Karlshorst. If the Soviets have also withdrawn from Karlshorst, the message will be passed via the U. S. Mission (British and French Military Governments) to the Soviet Embassy in East Berlin or via the Military Liaison Mission to the Headquarters of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany.

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4. If an East German official appears at BASC instead of a Soviet officer, he will be asked to leave and, if need be, escorted out. The statement in paragraph 1 above will then be made to the Soviet headquarters at Karlshorst or, if necessary, to the Soviet Embassy in East Berlin or the Headquarters of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany.

Tripartite Air Safety Measures

5. Any change in the situation in BASC will immediately be brought to the attention of the carriers serving Berlin. At the same time, an attempt will be made to advise the carriers what effect the Soviet action, seen in the light of the general situation obtaining at the time, may have on safety of flight in the Berlin corridors and control zone. In the absence of other indications of Soviet intentions, there should be no reason to presume from a mere Soviet withdrawal from BASC, unaccompanied by direct or implied threats, that there is a danger of physical interference with Allied aircraft.

6. BASC operations will be continued on a tripartite basis.

7. The Three Powers will assure that communications and navigational aids under their control are maintained in a manner which will assure the greatest safety of flight possible under the circumstances.

Communication of Flight Information

8. The Western Controllers will continue to pass flight plans to the Soviet desk in BASC, with a date-time stamp indicating the time of transmission, despite the absence of the Soviet Controller.

9. Flight information will be broadcast by radio on a fixed wave-length in order to assure that both the Soviets and the East Germans have been put on notice regarding Allied flights. An attempt will also be made to communicate the same information by teletype or telephone over one of the existing lines between East and West Berlin to the East German Air Traffic Control Authority at Schoenfeld. The various notifications made to the Soviet authorities (i.e., those referred to in paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 above and the note and public statement referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the tripartite paper of April 4, 1959) will contain details of how this will be done. Flight information will be so worded as to avoid any connotation of recognition of the GDR or of acceptance of an East German right to participate in air traffic control in the corridors and control zone.

10. The Allied will not entertain any claim by the GDR to have a right to participate in air traffic control in the corridors and control zone. However, under circumstances in which it is clear that the East German authorities are

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not claiming a right of control but are asking to discuss the purely technical details of communicating flight information (e.g., wave lengths, telecommunications channels), there is no objection to such discussions taking place either through the telecommunications channels described in paragraph 9 above or by way of some already established contact. These discussions will not be allowed to develop into negotiations which might connote a change in the Three Powers' basic attitude towards the GDR.

11. If the air traffic control authority at Schoenefeld, after expressly or tacitly accepting Western flight plans, communicates to BASC flight information for a flight in the Berlin corridors or control zone, BASC will reply by accepting the flight plan, if it does not conflict with an Allied flight, or by offering a different altitude if there is a conflict.

12. If the air traffic control authority at Schoenefeld replies with a statement purporting to deny clearance for overflight of the GDR or to refuse "guarantees of flight safety," BASC will send a further communication stating that flight plans are being communicated for information only and that the flight will take place or has taken place as scheduled.

13. BASC will send a similar communication if the East German authorities take any other action which claims either:

- (a) that they have the right to control Allied flights in the Berlin corridors; or
- (b) that notification of flight information by the Allied constitutes recognition of the GDR as a state.

14. If the East German authorities persist in asserting their authority to control flights (for example by repeatedly denying "guarantees of flight safety" or "clearance to overfly the GDR" or by repeatedly attempting to force the Three Powers into negotiations on undesirable contacts with GDR agencies regarding air access to Berlin), the Three Governments will consider whether the communication of flight information (by any means other than broadcasting) should be terminated. If a decision is taken to terminate such communication, the Three Governments will also consider whether they should at the same time:

a. Make a statement reiterating their rights and saying that they will in the future be forced to act on the assumption that the Soviets and East Germans will maintain absolute separation of their aircraft on the basis of the flight information broadcast by radio; and

b. Unilaterally take whatever measures may be appropriate with a view to assuring the continuation of Berlin services by the civil carriers or prepare, if necessary, to mount a "civil airlift" (i.e., substitute military for civil aircraft). (N.B. It may prove necessary to take such measures at an earlier stage.)

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Detailed Implementation

15. Details of the implementation of this paper will be worked out as needed by the three Embassies at Bonn, in consultation with "LIVE OAK" and other military headquarters as appropriate.

Public Statement

16. The note to the Soviet Government and the public statement provided for in paragraphs 2 and 3, respectively, of the April 4, 1959 paper will explain the procedures which the Three Powers intend to follow with respect to air access (e.g., wave lengths and channels for communicating flight safety information) as well as surface access.

Basis of This Planning

17. The above planning is based on the assumption that it will not be possible to negotiate with the Soviets a satisfactory modus vivendi for Berlin. In other circumstances, the following possible approaches to the problem might be considered:

a. The acceptance of an East German Controller in BASC as a Soviet agent (this would be comparable to the acceptance of East German highway and railroad checkpoint personnel as Soviet agents).

b. The reservation of fixed altitudes in the Berlin corridors for non-Allied aircraft, on the understanding that the remaining altitudes would be used exclusively by Allied aircraft.

November 30, 1959

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